



## Energy and Environmental Affairs

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## Baker-Polito Administration Awards \$76,000 in Grants for Recreational Saltwater Fishing Access Projects

**BOSTON** – December 22, 2016 – The Baker-Polito Administration today awarded \$76,545 in grants for recreational saltwater fishing access projects in Beverly, Chatham, Manchester, Scituate, Fall River, and Truro. The grants were awarded through the Department of Fish and Game's Division of Marine Fisheries (DMF) Public Access Small Grant Program, which uses revenue from the sale of recreational saltwater fishing permits to improve angler opportunity in Massachusetts' marine waters.

"The Department of Fish and Game's Public Access Small Grant Program supports our valuable tourism economy and enhances the ability of the more than 160,000 licensed saltwater anglers in Massachusetts to access our marine waters," **said Governor Charlie Baker**. "It is our Administration's priority to ensure all Massachusetts' residents and visitors can safely and reliably access the outdoor recreational opportunities our public lands and waters provide."

"The renovations and upgrades to these boating and fishing access points will provide even more opportunities for our state's residents and visitors to enjoy the Massachusetts coast," **said Lieutenant Governor Karyn Polito**. "Through these grants, we are pleased to work with municipalities to provide quality public access to our beautiful coastal waters."

These grants are funded from revenues in the Marine Recreational Fisheries Development Fund, and are the fourth round of grant funding since the state saltwater fishing permit was established in 2011. The saltwater fishing permit program provides funds for marine recreational fishing programs including fisheries research, management, and public access for anglers.

"Recreational saltwater fishing is an economic driver for our tourism industry on Massachusetts' coast, and these grants help support that economic activity," **said Energy and Environmental Affairs Secretary Matthew Beaton**. "In addition, as the grant program is funded through the recreational saltwater fishing permit program, we are able to provide improved services to anglers without impacting the Commonwealth's general fund."

"These local projects improve access and the overall salt water fishing experience for recreational anglers in Massachusetts," **said Department of Fish and Game (DFG) Commissioner George Peterson**. "This grant program is an important complement to our efforts to maintain and improve state boat access areas and recreational fishing piers."

DMF awarded funds to six coastal municipalities:

- **Beverly** – The Town was awarded \$14,850 in order to improve access to shoreline fishing in Obear Park. Improvements include removal of invasive plants, add informational signage, and clear pathways to water.
- **Chatham** – The Town was awarded \$4,000 for the installation of two fillet stations with wash down capabilities at Ryder's Cove and Barn Hill Landing.
- **Fall River** – The City of Fall River was awarded \$15,000 in order to increase the number of floats at the state-run Bicentennial Park boat ramp. This popular boat ramp is heavily used during summer months and the addition of floats will improve wait times for the launching and retrieval of vessels.
- **Manchester** – The Town of Manchester was awarded \$15,000 in order to install gangways and floats on their new launch facility. These floats will segregate trailored and car top vessels, making launching and retrieval of watercraft more efficient and reducing user conflicts.
- **Scituate** – The Town of Scituate was awarded \$12,695 to replace aging and nonfunctional lighting at two launch facilities at the town boat ramp on Cole Parkway and at the state boat ramp on Jericho Road. The old lights will be replaced with updated wiring and LED fixtures that use less electricity.
- **Truro** – The Town of Truro was awarded \$15,000 in order to expand the number of floats, install a wash down system, and install lighting at the state-run Pamet River boat ramp.

"These projects will help preserve fishing opportunities throughout the state's coastline and the funds we are providing will complement work being done at the facilities by the cities and towns receiving the grants," **said DMF Director David Pierce**. "We are excited to maintain this state-local partnership for the good of recreational anglers."

DMF administers the Marine Recreational Fisheries Development Fund with the assistance of the Marine Recreational Fisheries Development Panel, a group of private stakeholders that advises DMF on recreational fishing projects and initiatives. Under the state law that established the recreational saltwater fishing permit, one-third of all license fees are

dedicated to recreational saltwater fishing infrastructure projects in Massachusetts, ensuring better access to coastal fishing.

"Our state has tremendous coastal resources, but without access we can't take advantage of them. That's why it's important that the town has worked to create this opportunity, and that the administration is investing in it. Together, the efforts of state government and the community will make a real difference for the quality of life that access provides," **said Senate Minority Leader Bruce Tarr (R-Gloucester)**. "These funds will help install floats and gangways to aid people's boat access for saltwater fishing and other recreational activities."

"I am extremely grateful to the Baker-Polito Administration for this generosity in funding," **said Representative Brad Hill (R-Ipswich)**. "Fisheries and recreational water usage in the Town of Manchester-by-the-Sea are important economic and cultural pillars of the community, and this money will be put to extremely good use."

"Expanding fishing access to the Taunton River will provide Greater Fall River residents with increased recreational opportunities," **said State Senator Michael Rodrigues (D-Westport)**. "This is something I've been working on for a long time, and I am grateful for the Administration's support of our local fishing community."

"This funding will help ease congestion at the Bicentennial Park boat ramp so that residents and visitors may better enjoy the Commonwealth's waters," **said State Representative Paul Schmid III (D-Westport), House Chair of the Joint Committee on Environment, Natural Resources and Agriculture**. "Thank you to the Baker-Polito Administration for recognizing the importance and value of recreational fishing in Massachusetts and the South Coast."

"The addition of more boarding floats will further enhance the very popular and well used Bicentennial Park boat ramp in the district," **said Representative Carole Fiola (D-Fall River)**. "I thank the Baker-Polito Administration for continuing to work with us to make our waterfront improvements a priority."

The Department of Fish and Game (DFG) is responsible for promoting the conservation and enjoyment of the Commonwealth's natural resources. DFG carries out this mission through land protection and wildlife habitat management, management of inland and marine fish and wildlife species, and ecological restoration of fresh water, salt water, and terrestrial habitats. DFG promotes enjoyment of the Massachusetts environment through outdoor skills workshops, fishing festivals and other educational programs, and by enhancing access to the Commonwealth's rivers, lakes, and coastal waters.

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